

## **CABINET**

**Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet of South Norfolk District Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on Monday 11 June 2018 at 9.00 a.m.**

### **Members Present:**

**Cabinet:** Councillors J Fuller (Chairman), M Edney, K Mason Billig, L Neal and B Stone

**Apologies:** Councillor Y Bendle

**Non-Appointed:** Councillors M Gray, T Lewis and G Minshull

**Officers in Attendance:** The Chief Executive (S Dinneen), the Director of Communities and Wellbeing (J Sutterby), the Director of Growth and Business Development (D Lorimer), the Head of Governance (E Hodds), the Accountancy Manager (M Fernandez-Graham), the Service Manager – CNC (S Fulcher), the Senior Governance Officer (E Goddard) and the Business Improvement Lead (E Pepper).

### **2648 URGENT ITEM – CLIFF JORDAN**

Cabinet expressed its sadness with regards to the recent passing of former Leader of Norfolk County Council, Cliff Jordan. The Chairman confirmed that a message of condolence would be forwarded to the Leader's Office at Norfolk County Council, on behalf of South Norfolk Council.

**RESOLVED:** That a message of condolence be forwarded to the Leader's Office at Norfolk County Council, following the passing of its former Leader, Cliff Jordan.

## **2649 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr K Mason Billig declared an 'other' interest in the matter referred to below:

<b>Minute No.</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Declaration</b>
2655	CNC Building Control – Future Arrangements	Partner works in the building trade

## **2650 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held 30 April 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## **2651 PERFORMANCE, RISKS, REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET POSITION REPORT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2017/18**

### **The Subject of the Decision**

Members considered the report of the Business Improvement Lead, the Senior Governance Officer, and the Accountancy Manager, which detailed the Council's performance against strategic measures, risk position and the revenue and capital position at Quarter 4 2017/18.

Cllr B Stone introduced the report, explaining that the position at the end of Quarter 4 (31 March 2018) was very positive. Only 3 of the 33 performance measures had failed to reach the stretch targets, and corporate risk capacity remained positive. With regard to budgets, there was a revenue surplus of £2.6 million for 2017/18, and capital expenditure was £6.1 million against a budget of £29.5 million. Looking ahead, balanced budgets were predicted for 2018/19 and 2019/20.

The Accountancy Manager presented members with a detailed summary of the Council's performance. Members noted that the increase in the surplus since the Quarter 3 forecast, was principally due to business rates and the introduction of the Valuation Office Agency's "Check, Challenge Appeal" system. The Accountancy Manager explained that no one had reached the appeal stage at the end of Quarter 4. As the future was unclear, as to how many future appeals would be processed, it was felt prudent to use some of the surplus to increase the earmarked Localisation of Business Rates Reserve by £989,173. This approach would be revisited next year, when the Council would be better informed with regard to the impact of the new appeals procedure.

Officers went on outline performance under each of the corporate priorities, and responded to a number of questions on points of detail.

Discussion followed with regard to those performance measures that had failed to meet the stretch targets. Officers explained that CNC Building Control was facing increased competition and the adverse weather conditions in the final quarter had hindered construction. Members noted that working with reduced staffing levels had helped to mitigate the impact of this. Following on from this, Cllr M Gray explained that staff in CNC had recently advised him that they were no longer able to respond to customers within 5 working days (as stipulated on the website), due to these reduced staffing levels, and that customers should now expect a response within 10 days. Whilst sympathising with the pressures on staff, he wondered if this gave a good impression to members of the public. The Chief Executive agreed, and advised that this issue would be brought to the attention of staff, and the website, would, if required, be amended to reflect current response times.

Regarding the % of municipal waste recycled, reused and composted, members noted that this was not due to hit target due to the low totals of waste collected in March during the adverse weather conditions, and the increase in residual waste.

Concerning the % of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks or within the extended time, members noted that the three applications that had been determined out of time, had all been related, on the same site, and very complex. Members were pleased to note that these issues had since been resolved.

## **The Decision**

### **RESOLVED:**

#### **1. To Note:**

- a) the 2017/18 performance for the year and the combined efforts across the Directorates to deliver the vision of the Council (detail contained in Appendix 1).
- b) the current position with respect to risks and to accept the actions to support risk mitigation (detail contained in Appendix 2).
- c) the capital and revenue provisional outturn position and the reason for the variances on the General Fund (detail contained in Appendices 3 and 4).

#### **2. TO RECOMMEND THAT COUNCIL approves:**

- d) the budget virements which exceed £100,000 in accordance with the rules of financial governance (detail contained in Appendix 6).
- e) the movements in reserves as outlined in Section 2.3.5.
- f) the slippage requests of £333,447 on revenue and £22,318,465 on capital
- g) the amended Capital programme and its financing for the next four financial years as set out in Appendices 7 and 8.

## **The Reasons for the Decision**

To ensure processes are in place to improve performance, that the management of risks is sound, and that budgets are managed effectively and in line with the Council's corporate objectives.

## **Other Options Considered**

None

## **2652 TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18**

### **The Subject of the Decision**

Members considered the report of the Accountancy Manager which reviewed the treasury management activity during the financial year 2017/18, and reported on the prudential indicators, as required by CIPFA's Treasury Management Code of Practice.

The Accountancy Manager drew members' attention to the salient points of the report.

Members noted that investments rose by £1.84 million, from 1 April 2017, to £36.137 million at 31 March 2018. These investments included £13.5 million in loans/equity in to Council companies, in line with the Council's Commercial Investment Strategy. Members were pleased to note the positive performance of Big Sky, one of the Council's companies.

### **The Decision**

#### **RESOLVED: TO RECOMMEND THAT COUNCIL**

- a) notes the treasury activity for the second half of the year and that it complies with the agreed strategy;
- b) approves the 2017/18 prudential indicators for the latter six months of the year.

### **The Reasons for the Decision**

To ensure that the Council's investment strategy remains prudent.

### **Other Options Considered**

None

## **2653 CABINET CORE AGENDA**

Members noted the latest version of the Cabinet Core Agenda

## **2654 CNC BUILDING CONTROL – FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS**

### **The Subject of the Decision**

Before consideration of the report, Cllr T Lewis drew attention to some bad press that had recently circulated with regard to issues with newly built properties in Costessey, where the building regulations had been approved through the National House-Building Council (NHBC). He explained that the NHBC had also provided the ten-year warranty on these properties and he questioned whether there was a conflict of interest. Members suggested that this was also the case in relation to some properties in Poringland. Officers explained that due to the deregulation of Building Control, developers were free to utilise whichever Building Control service they desired. Officers had recently investigated whether it was feasible for the Council to provide a warranty service through the Local Authority Building Control (LABC), but this was not currently a viable option for the Council.

Turning to the marketing of CNC Building Control, the Director of Growth and Business Development explained that details of the service provided were forwarded to all planning applicants. She further explained that she planned to provide a brief training session for members, with regard to the distinction between Planning and Building Control services, and the different roles and responsibilities.

It was then

**RESOLVED:** To exclude the public and press from the meeting under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended)

Members considered the *exempt* report of the CNC Service Manager, which sought Cabinet approval to align and renew all five participating authorities' agreements for CNC Building Control, and for South Norfolk Council to continue to host and manage the Building Control Service.

The CNC Service Manager presented the report to members, outlining the key issues and the associated risks. He explained that the four other authorities had already agreed to enter in to the new agreement under the proposed new terms.

During discussion, attention was drawn to CNC's current share of the market, and the Chairman stressed the importance of quality of service.

### **The Decision**

**RESOLVED:** To:

1. agree to continue to host and manage the Building Control Service on behalf of Broadland District Council, the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk, Fenland District Council and Norwich City Council;
2. delegate approval of the Participating Authority Agreement to the Director of Growth and Business Development in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.

### **The Reasons for the Decision**

To ensure stability to the CNC Building Control Partnership.

### **Other Options Considered**

As outlined in the report.

(The meeting concluded at 10.05 am)

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Chairman